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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/815,282	04/01/2004	Tilak M. Shah	4179-128	8353
23448	7590	12/19/2007 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY / TECHNOLOGY LAW PO BOX 14329 RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC 27709		
			EXAMINER	
			TRAN, THAO T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1794	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			12/19/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/815,282	SHAH, TILAK M.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Thao T. Tran	1794	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 October 2007.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 74-108 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 74-108 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This is in response to the Reply filed on 10/02/2007.
2. Claims 74-108 are currently pending in this application. All claims have been previously presented.
3. In view of the prior Office action, the prior art rejection of the claims is maintained below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
5. Claims 74-108 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Connors et al. (US Pat. 6,976,950).

Connors discloses an attenuation device. In one embodiment, the attenuation device comprises an inflatable container 68 having a generally circular profile (see Fig. 5), and a spherical configuration. The diameter of the inflatable container is 0.25-6 inches, or 1-3 inches, significantly overlapping the instantly claimed range (see col. 11, ln. 6-17). The inflatable container comprises a flexible wall 70 having first and second components 74, 76, bonding together by seam 78 (see col. 11, ln. 27-40). In this embodiment, Connors teaches the wall of the balloon to have multiple sheets of polyurethane (see paragraph bridging col. 12-13). However, the reference does not teach the wall of the balloon to have the presently claimed layers.

In another embodiment (see Fig. 16), Connors teaches the wall of the device comprising at least one gas barrier layer and at least one moisture barrier layer. The gas barrier layer

comprises polyvinylidene chloride or ethyl vinyl alcohol. The moisture barrier layer comprises polyurethane (see col. 23, ln. 1-20). The overall thickness of the wall is no more than 0.003 inches (3.0 mil). The polyurethane layer is about 0.0025-0.025 inches (0.0635-0.635 mm), and the polyvinylidene chloride layer is about 5-20 microns thick (see col. 23, ln. 44-54), significantly overlapping the presently claimed ranges. A tie layer is also disposed between the gas barrier layer and the moisture barrier layer (see col. 23, ln. 54-61).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have employed the multilayers in the embodiment of Fig. 16 in the balloon of Fig. 5, for the purpose of enhancing flexibility, moisture barrier, gas barrier, and high impact strength.

The interior cavity 72 of the inflatable container contains a compressible media, such as gas (see col. 11, ln. 41-44). The compressible media include compositions that generate gas in the presence of water. One example would be sodium carbonate generating carbon dioxide (see col. 32, ln. 28-43).

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 10/02/2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the

applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971).

In response to Applicants' argument that Connors does not teach a non-pillowed and spheroidal balloon, it is noted that the balloon of Connors is spheroidal in shape. Moreover, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the shape of an article would have been a design choice depending upon user's preference and intended use.

Conclusion

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thao T. Tran whose telephone number is 571-272-1080. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, from 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Milton I. Cano can be reached on 571-272-1398. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Thao T. Tran
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1794

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